

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 060096
ORIGIN EUR-12

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P 090037Z MAR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 060096

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, PO

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO NY TIMES ARTICLE

1. DEPARTMENT PLANS FOLLOWING RESPONSE, ON AN IF ASKED BASIS, TO ALLEGATIONS IN KENNETH MAXWELL ARTICLE IN MARCH 8 NEW YORK TIMES THAT OFFICIAL WASHINGTON IS A BIT GLOOMY ABOUT PORTUGAL THESE DAYS AND THAT A STATE DEPARTMENT FUNCTIONARY SAID QUOTE IT LOOKS AS IF PORTUGAL IS GOING DOWN THE DRAIN UNQUOTE. EMBASSY MAY DRAW UPON RESPONSE IF PRESS QUERIES ARISE IN LISBON.

2. QUOTE THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS NOT PESSIMISTIC ABOUT PORTUGAL'S PROSPECTS. ON THE CONTRARY, THE ADMINISTRATION BELIEVES THAT THE PORTUGUESE PEOPLE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED A GREAT DEAL SINCE THE 1974 REVOLUTION. A VIABLE DEMOCRACY HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, OVER HALF A MILLION REFUGEES ARE BEING ASSIMILATED, AND PORTUGAL'S STANDING IN THE WORLD COMMUNITY HAS NEVER BEEN HIGHER. THE ADMINISTRATION IS CONFIDENT THAT PORTUGAL WILL OVERCOME ITS PRESENT ECONOMIC

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DIFFICULTIES AND HAS RECENTLY REITERATED TO THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE CONSOLIDATION OF PORTUGUESE DEMOCRACY. UNQUOTE

3. FYI DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS HAVE CONSISTENTLY EXPRESSED VIEWS OPPOSITE TO THOSE ATTRIBUTED TO THEM BY MAXWELL, AND MOST RECENTLY DID SO BEFORE HAMILTON SUB-COMMITTEE OF HIRC.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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